

Message Text

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SUBJECT: REVISED FY 1976 TRADE PROMOTION PROGRAM

REFERENCES: A) STATE 172052
B) ABIDJAN 6662
C) STATE 200631

1. COMPUTER-RELATED BUSINESS EQUIPMENT TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR, MARCH 1976: EMBASSY HAS NOW DISCUSSED PROPOSED TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR WITH BOTH PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT END-USERS OF COMPUTER EQUIPMENT. GOIC, WHICH IS PRINCIPAL USER OF COMPUTER EQUIPMENT, HAS EVINced LITTLE INTEREST. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED INDICATIONS OF INTEREST, HOWEVER, FROM PRIVATE SECTOR. BOTH NCR AND APECO, WHICH ARE REPRESENTED IN ABIDJAN, BELIEVE THERE ARE PROSPECTS FOR A LIMITED MARKET IN MEDIUM TO SMALL COMPUTER HARDWARE AND PERIPHERAL EQUIPMENT. SUCH HARDWARE AND PERIPHERAL EQUIPMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH IBM SYSTEMS, SINCE IBM-FRANCE IS VIRTUALLY SOLE SUPPLIER TO GOIC. SHOULD COMMERCE DEPARTMENT DECIDE TO SCHEDULE THIS TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR FOR ABIDJAN, EMBASSY WOULD UNDERTAKE MARKET STUDY SOONEST.

2. EMBASSY HAS NOTED MATERIALS HANDLING EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION, WHICH IS PROCEEDING TO THREE FRENCH-SPEAKING POSTS, BUT IS SCHEDULED FOR THE SAME MONTH AS THE COMPUTER-RELATED BUSINESS TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR. EMBASSY IS VERY INTERESTED IN KNOWING TYPES OF HANDLING EQUIPMENT COMMERCE
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DEPARTMENT IS PROMOTING ON THIS MISSION. FOR EXAMPLE,

PORT OF ABIDJAN IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT AS REGIONAL PORT FROM WHICH GOODS ARE TRANSPORTED INLAND TO LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES IN WEST AFRICA. PORT IS EXPANDING, AS IS PORT OF SAN PEDRO IN WESTERN IVORY COAST, AND THERE WOULD BE DEFINITE INTEREST IN IVORY COAST IN MATERIALS HANDLING EQUIPMENT FOR PORTS. SHOULD MISSION BE PROMOTING THIS KIND OF EQUIPMENT, SCHEDULING ABIDJAN (ENROUTE FROM CASABLANCA TO KINSHASA) WOULD HAVE MUCH GREATER IMPACT THAN COMPUTER-RELATED BUSINESS EQUIPMENT TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR.

3. EMBASSY IS DISAPPOINTED THAT COMMERCIAL PROGRAM FOR AFRICA IN FY 1976 WOULD APPEAR TO PRECLUDE SCHEDULING AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT OR FOOD PROCESSING AND PACKAGING MISSIONS OR CATALOGUE SHOWS FOR IVORY COAST. THESE ACTIVITIES APPEAR TO BE DIRECTED THIS YEAR PRIMARILY TO ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICA. IVORY COAST, IN ITS DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, HAS CONSISTENTLY PLACED PRIMARY EMPHASIS ON AGRICULTURE AND THE PROCESSING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS. EMBASSY IS FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS DIRECTED AT THESE ACTIVITIES WOULD HAVE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT ON US EXPORTS TO IVORY COAST AND ON CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF IVORY COAST. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY CONSIDERATION COMMERCE COULD GIVE TO SCHEDULING SUCH A TRADE MISSION.
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